



The Jewish Education Center Of Cleveland's Óã-- a newsletter for educators

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Justice, Justice, You Shall Pursue

(Deuteronomy 16:20)

**"Jews and Social Justice", by Rabbi David Saperstein Torah at the Center
(NY: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1999) Volume 3, No. 1.**

Using the history of Jewish involvement in American society as a springboard, Rabbi Saperstein creates a social justice curriculum that weaves together Jewish text and prayer with the American Civil Rights Movement. The article offers several mini-units, which guide the educator on the following topics: The Jewish Definition of Justice; The Rule Of Law; The Blessings Of The Righteous; and Repairing The World. Each lesson is structured around a Jewish concept and expanded with historical information and vignettes, followed by age-differentiated discussion questions and activities. This issue will be useful to any educator interested in examining the Jewish foundation of social action and the contribution made by the Jews to American life. The mini-units are targeted for students in fourth grade through high school.

*-- Reviewed by Melissa Bailin Bernstein,
Curriculum Associate*

Web Sites

- **Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism - <http://www.shamash.org/reform/rac>**

This site is dedicated to keeping its membership informed regarding social action issues (including detailed legislative background), resources, and social action programs in Reform congregations.

- **The Hunger Site - <http://www.thehungersite.com>**

Once you reach the site, simply click on the button to make a free food donation to hungry people worldwide. A great way to begin any Internet session with your students!

- **SocialAction.com - <http://www.socialaction.com>**

An on-line Jewish magazine that identifies contemporary social action issues and offers information on social action opportunities and organizations.

*-- Compiled by Maury Greenberg,
Director of Technology Resources*

**When Love is Not Enough: Spousal Abuse in Rabbinic and Contemporary Judaism,
by Rabbi Julie Ringold Spitzer (NY: Women of Reform Judaism, 1995).**

Up to and into the 1980s, Jews generally denied that spousal abuse was represented within the Jewish community at the same percentage as the general public. In more recent years, however, there has been a shift in this consciousness; now there is more open communication, resources to help the victims, and counseling services available to families. This volume offers a framework from which to address this issue in schools, congregations and organizations. It contains background information on abuse (including charts and statistics), traditional texts, contemporary reactions, essays, prayers and program resources. Teachers of high school students and adults will find this an interesting resource, helping to frame a difficult conversation.

*-- Reviewed by Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz,
Director Of Curricular Resources*

Videos Worth Mentioning:

The Ratner Media & Technology Center has some excellent videos available, including: **Skokie, Mississippi Burning, Not in Our Town, Time For Justice: America's Civil Rights Movement** and **The Murder of Mary Phagan**.

Fires In The Mirror. Video distributed by PBS, 1993. (90 minutes in b/w).

This is a video of Anna Deavere Smith's critically acclaimed one-woman play that presents a compelling view of urban, racial and class conflict. Fires In The Mirror is about the racial turmoil that exploded in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn on August 19, 1991. At that time a young African-American boy was killed when hit by a car driven by a Jew. Three hours later, a 29 year-old rabbinical student from Australia was gunned down in retaliation. Using interwoven monologues, Smith assumes the personalities of nearly 30 characters in order to explore the many perspectives. This highly charged film offers students insight into how events can be understood differently by various cultures. Recommended for ages 14 and older.

-- Reviewed by *Bonnie Shapiro*,
Ratner Media & Technology Center Administrative Associate

Suggestions For Young Students:

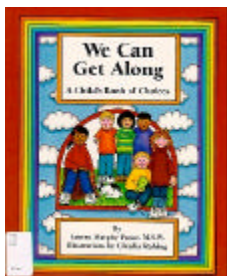
עֵל הַיָּם לְעַמִּי (Let My People Go) A Big Book About Freedom

This Big Book, developed in easy Hebrew, tells of Civil Rights issues in the U.S. at the time of Martin Luther King – with a conceptual connection to Jewish slavery in Egypt. Also available in English.

A JESP class on creating Big Books will begin on January 25, 2000 and will meet for four sessions. Continuing education credit is available, along with a stipend for completing the course. Please call the JECC for more information.



We Can Get Along: A Child's Book Of Choices, by Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W. (Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 1997). – With Leader's Guide



This is a wonderful tool for initiating conversation with preschool students about their feelings towards others and dealing with conflict. The book focuses on getting along with others through activities such as playing, or walking to school and is full of colorful pictures of children from different ethnic backgrounds. The leader's guide organizes the book into lessons with activities and discussion topics; it also includes a list of 25 appropriate ways to express anger and 50 words to describe one's own feelings.

-- Reviewed by *Melissa Bailin Bernstein*,
Curriculum Associate

The Cow Of No Color: Riddle Stories And Justice Tales From Around The World, by Nina Jaffe and Steve Zeitlin. (NY: Henry Holt, 1998). A collection of tales about bringing wrongdoers to justice, extending mercy, practicing forgiveness, settling disputes, and more -- all chosen to engage readers with issues involving justice. Recommended for grades four to seven.

You Never Know: A Legend Of The Lamed-Vavniks, by Francine Prose. (NY: Greenwillow Books, 1998). When poor Schmue'l's prayers save Plotchnik from drought and flood, he is discovered to be a *lamed-vavnik*, one of the 36 Just people on whom the righteousness of the world depends. A thought-provoking story for grades one through three.

-- *The above two books are reviewed by Linda Silver,*
JECC Librarian